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SUBJECT: H1N1 UPDATE: 14,940 CONFIRMED CASES

REF: A) Berlin 1039, B) Berlin 1025 and previous.

¶1. (U) SUMMARY: The number of confirmed H1N1 infections in Germany increased slightly by 359 cases, bringing the total as of August 26 to 14,940. The state of North Rhine-Westphalia proposes protection for pregnant women working with flu patients. END SUMMARY

¶2. (U) At its August 26 press briefing, the National Reference Center for Influenza at the Robert Koch Institute (RKI) confirmed a total of 359 new (laboratory and non-laboratory) H1N1 cases in Germany, increasing the total number of H1N1 cases to 14,940. New cases were distributed among the federal states as follows: North Rhine-Westphalia (NRW) (101), Baden-Wuerttemberg (98), Bavaria (44), Lower-Saxony (34), Hesse (24), Schleswig-Holstein (13), Brandenburg (12), Rhineland-Palatinate (12), Hamburg (6), Saarland (5), Saxony-Anhalt (5), Thuringia (3), Saxony (1) and Berlin (1).

¶3. (U) According to RKI, 225 of the total 359 new cases are attributed to people returning from travel abroad. New cases include non-laboratory H1N1 cases that exhibited symptoms after being in contact with a laboratory confirmed infected person.

¶4. (U) NRW remains the German state with the highest number of confirmed virus cases with a total of 4,869, followed by Lower-Saxony (2,355) and Baden-Wuerttemberg (1,991 cases). About 24 percent (3,583) of all confirmed infections in Germany have resulted from domestic transmission.

¶5. (U) Following WHO's warning that there is an increased risk for pregnant women of complications from the new flu, NRW health officials have recommended that employers grant excused absences to pregnant employees with potentially high exposure to infected patients. This applies to hospitals and medical practices. To date, about one third of the reported H1N1 infections in Germany occurred in NRW.

MURPHY